



Great Lakes Piping Plover Call

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The Piping Plover nesting season has come to a close and many have migrated to their winter “homes.” 2004 was a banner year for the Great Lakes population with a record number of pairs and young fledged in the wild.

Here is a summary of 2004 nesting efforts:

	<u># pairs</u>	<u># fledged</u>
Michigan, lower peninsula		
Ludington State Park	3	10
Sleeping Bear Dunes NL, mainland	12	18
Sleeping Bear Dunes NL, North Manitou	7	18
South Fox Island	1	4
Fisherman's Island State Park	1	2
Cross Village and Bliss townships	9	12
Wilderness State Park	9	7
High and Beaver Islands	3	2
Michigan, upper peninsula		
Pointe Aux Chenes	4	8
Port Inland area	3	10
Grand Marais	2	2
Vermilion	1	0
Total	55	93
<i>Including Captive Reared birds</i>		<i>103</i>

There was much to be excited about in the 2004 Great Lakes Piping Plover breeding season. We documented:

- greatest number of breeding pairs recorded since listing (55 pairs)
- greatest number of chicks fledged in wild since listing (93 fledged)
- recolonization of South Fox Island in Lake Michigan
- return of large numbers of young from 2002 and 2003
- exploration and use of new habitats by Piping Plovers on lakes Huron, Michigan and Superior
- an increase in population by >300% since listing in 1986; Great Lakes Piping Plovers are ~1/3 way to recovery goal of 150 pairs.

Thanks to everyone who has worked so tirelessly on behalf of Piping Plovers and shoreline conservation and protection in the last 20 years. Successful recovery is not assured, but it certainly holds more promise now than at listing.

Thank You

Without the numerous hours worked and donated by monitors and volunteers, our knowledge of 2004 nesting season would be dramatically less. Volunteers provide essential support to recovery efforts. Below are listed many participants from 2004:

- Michigan DNR Plover Patrol
- Wilderness State Park monitors and staff
- Fisherman's Island State Park staff
- Ludington State Park monitors & volunteers
- Lake State University monitors at Vermilion
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore biologist, biotechs, SCAs and volunteers
- Hiawatha National Forest, St. Ignace & Rapid River districts
- Huron-Manistee National Forest
- Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, Archie Kiogama and Bill Parsons
- Grand Marais' monitor, residents & volunteers
- Cross Village township residents & volunteers, Sally and Kenyon Stebbins, Nan Hogan, Bill Sommerville
- Univ. of Michigan Biological Station and volunteers, Amy Canavan, Alice Van Zoeren and Tiffany Pahs
- Central Michigan Univ. Biological Station, Beth Leuck and Nancy Seefelt
- Dee Miller, Keith Saylor, Gary & Tess Nelkie, Wendy Bruno, Steve Truman
- Ludington's Buttersville peninsula Plover Patrol: Carolyn & Ron Ptaszenski, Dick & Anne Caldwell and James & Laurel Smith, Don & Carol Copeland

Nine zoos sponsored 18 keepers for 5-7+ day stays to assist with salvage captive rearing efforts. With keeper assistance, organized by Detroit Zoo's bird curator Tom Schneider, we were able to successfully rear and release 10 fledglings in 2004. *Many* thanks to the following zoos that sponsored keepers in 2004:

- Detroit Zoo, Detroit, MI
- Brookfield Zoo, Chicago, IL
- Disney's Animal Kingdom, FL
- John Ball Zoo, Grand Rapids, MI
- San Diego Zoo, CA
- Sea World, Orlando, FL

Many thanks to the fantastic keepers who did an excellent job under rustic conditions.

Sign of an early winter?

Many Great Lakes birds have already made the trip south to their winter residence, and we have already received reports of ~30. Some of them even arrived by 2nd week of July – just as summer started up north! Amazingly, two captive reared fledglings from 2004 (Grand Marais and Pointe aux Chenes) appear to have arrived separately at the same winter location in Georgia; Brandon Noel a graduate student and winter observer will be keeping an eye on them until they migrate next spring. Good luck plovers and hang on during hurricane season!

Questions comments should be directed to

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